disbursetment of committed aid/loans and *to* ensure that dependence on external financing is progressively reduced.

Electoral reforms to discourage non-. ssrioug candidates to contest as inde-pendents

362. SHRI P. N. SUKUL:

SHRIMATI SUDHA VIJAY JOSHI:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUS- TICE be pleased to state:

(a) how many' candidates filed their nominations as independents for the Lok Sabha elections held recently;

(b) how many of them were elected as Members of Parliament and how many lost their deposits; and

(c) whether Government are "consider-. ing to introduce reforms in the electoral laws with a view to discouraging non-se rious candidates from contesting deletions as independents? »

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND (MINES WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI): (a) 3634 independent candidates filed their nominations for the Lok Sabha Elections, 1989.

(b) 13 independent candidates were elected. Number of candidates who for^ feited deposits is being collected from the concerned Chief Electoral Officers.

(c) This is among the proposals pre sently under the consideration of Govern ment.

Total votes polled by different parties in the General Elections

363. SHRIMATI SUDHA VIJAY JOSHI:

SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU:

. Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the approximate percentage of the total votes polled in favour of different national parties in the General Elections to Lok Sabha held recently; and

(b) the, corresponding figures in the General Elections held in 19847

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI): (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid o_n the Table of the House.

Franchise exercised by the youths in 18 *to 21* years of age group in the General Elections

364. SHRIMATI SUDHA VIJAY JOSHI: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many youths in the 18 to 21 velars of age group got voting rights during the General Elec. tions to Lok Sabha,, held recently;

(b) if so, what is the approximate percentage of those! who exercised their franchise in the General Elections; and

(c) whether any study relating to their reaction in getting voting rights have! been conducted?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF . THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI): (a) The voting. age having been reduced to 18 through an amendment to article 326 of the Constitution, all those who had attained *the* age of 18 as on 1st April 1989, got such voting rights.

' (b) The Election Commission has informed that 35. 7 million persons in the age group of 18 to 21, had been added to the electorate for the recent Lok Sabha elections and youths in large numbers had also participated in the elections. However, no compiled statistics are available regarding the exact number of persons in this age group who had actually voted.

(c) Lowering of the voting age has been welcomed by everyone includingthe youths '